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Portland, OR 97214

August 15, 2016

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U.S. EPA
ATTN: Harbor Comments
805 SW Broadway, Suite 500
Portland, OR 97205

The EPA needs to keep their hands out of the Willamette River cleanup issue. They should clean up their own act before they come here and try to clean up our river contamination. D.C. doesn't even have a container deposit bill for heaven's sake. Oregon is way ahead of them when it comes to environmental issues and doesn't need them telling us how to take care of our rivers.

Being the son of a landscaper, I know there are much less invasive and more natural ways to clear a waterway of pollution and contaminants. Just one of those ways is to place plants in the water that are designed to remove the impurities. Another way is to allow the water to flow the contaminants downstream and out to the ocean. We can help this along, but for the most part it's a process that occurs naturally. It is definitely a process that will keep more of our residents working and will not add to the ever growing homeless population in the city.

If the EPA is allowed to follow through with their plan, many people will end up without a job. The amount of job loss caused by restricted access due to the construction will result in an extremely adverse situation for Portland. We'll have people who are forced to move out of the area in order to find work. This would hurt us ten times more than we already are in terms of poverty and the declining economy. We should be welcoming more people with an abundance of jobs, not sending them away due to a lack of work available.

The amount of money the EPA says it will cost to fix the river problem is grossly exorbitant. If we're going to spend that kind of money, we need to put it towards other, more perilous projects such as helping the homeless and disabled residents get into housing. The citizens of Portland cannot afford for their taxes to increase. I know that if my taxes go up, my rent will go up. I certainly don't make enough money to pay higher housing costs and as an advocate for those with disabilities, I know I am not alone.

There are other alternatives to return the Willamette River to its former glory. There is no need to spend upwards of a billion dollars and damage our economy and our citizens more than they already are, to get it done. At the very least, we should be exploring those other options. One of the best ways is to leave the river alone and allow nature to take its course. There is proof that over time the river has begun restoring itself. If the EPA would do more tests they would see this, but they've decided to base their proposal on data they collected over a decade in the past. They could have been completing tests over this time frame and seen that things are changing for the better, but they haven't. Why is that? It's imperative that all options are considered before moving forward with the EPA's unnecessary and expensive proposal to clean the river.

Sincerely,

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